

Shortgrass Country
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Autumn has brought the livestock feed peddlers out in great abundance. Mail calls, I suspect, are being delayed by the increased volume in offers to sell fabulous mixtures and minerals. Big slashes are bound to have been taken from the forest lands to handle the paper goods that the salesmen are shipping and delivering every day.

The proclaimed profit return on these products is such that the decision of what to buy is becoming a problem for a tax accountant. It's one thing for a manufacturer of a magic formula to claim that for each dollar invested his product will return \$15.

You can see what a truckload at, say \$120 a ton could lead you into. Run up a score that high and the tax man would be eating a hole in your outfit the erosion problems that the Grand Canyon wouldn't cover. Even on a small ranch, you could have more write-ons than you could start to side step. Now wouldn't it be a thrill to go down to the bank next April to borrow several thousand just because you'd chumped off and bought one of those money makers? Bankers scream loud enough when you have to refloat your burden to pay your sales tax. I don't know what you'd hear if you had to add an income tax to the outflow. Probably a noise that'd bring a stillness to an African jungle movie.

Feedmongers could best serve the ranch industry by manufacturing a special formula that wouldn't do anything. Banty chickens and Shetland ponies are the only unpopular lightweight merchandise: the more wool and mohair you grow, the nearer you are to the bankrupt court. A nutrition expert that would force you to market light lambs and calves would be the answer. One who could add a depilatory agent to an old ewe or an old goats' diet could be the salvation of the business.

Never mind how close the miracle mineral and medicine men have come towards using my idea. Fortified additives combined with medicated potions are offered that will do everything from disinfecting the chicken house to de-hookworming your cowboys. Four ounces of a certain remedy sprinkled on stock salt will cure everything from bovine rickets to sprocket trouble in your children's bicycles.

I've heard them all and so have you. What we need now is a frost preventive followed by a few sunny days.